

Message Text

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61

ACTION ARA-20

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FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5823

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

CINCSO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE TEGUCIGALPA 4555

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, HO

SUBJ: LOPEZ MAKES NO SPEECH ON FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF COUP

1. THE COUNTRY HAD BEEN EXPECTING THAT CHIEF OF STATE LOPEZ WOULD MAKE A SPEECH ON DECEMBER 4, THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE COUP AGAINST THE CRUZ GOVERNMENT. IT HAD BEEN EXPECTED THAT THE SPEECH WOULD DESCRIBE THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE REGIME'S FIRST YEAR AND ANNOUNCE NEW PROGRAM POLICIES OF THE GOVERNMENT. LOPEZ WILL PROBABLY MAKE THE EXPECTED SPEECH ON JANUARY 1 IN THE ANNUAL "STATE OF THE UNION" MESSAGE TO THE COUNTRY.

2. THE PRESS CARRIED GENERALLY DOWNBEAT STORIES ON THE FIRST YEAR OF THE MILITARY REGIME. TIEMPO PUBLISHED A FRONT PAGE EDITORIAL ON DECEMBER 4 WHICH RECOGNIZED THE INEPTITUDE OF THE CRUZ GOVERNMENT, COMPLIMENTED THE MILITARY REGIME ON ITS POSITIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS BUT CRITICISED THE FAILURES OF THE GOVERNMENT AND WARNED THAT THE ARMED FORCES WOULD BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SUCCESS OR FAILURE OF THE GOVERNMENT. LA NOTICIA OF DECEMBER 4 CRITICIZED STRONGLY THE ACTIONS OF THE REGIME AND PARTICULARLY THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS FAILED TO ACT

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IN COOPERATION WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR. LA PRENSA'S

EDITORIAL OF DECEMBER 4 STATED THAT THE COUNTRY IS IN POORER CONDITION THAT IT WAS A YEAR AGO AND THAT HIGH OFFICIALS OF THE GOVERNMENT ARE FOMENTING DEMAGOGERY AND POPULISM. THE EL CRONISTA OF DECEMBER 4 CARRIED A FRONT PAGE REPRINT OF A LIBERAL PARTY DECLARATION WHICH SAYS THAT THE MILITARY REGIME HAS BEEN A DISASTER FOR THE COUNTRY. THE DECEMBER 4 EL DIA EDITORIAL STATED THAT THE YEAR HAD ONLY PRODUCED AN INCREASE IN THE COST OF LIVING AND THE LACK OF GASOLINE, BUT THAT WHAT THE NEW YEAR BRINGS WILL DEPEND UPON THE ACTIONS AND ATTITUDE OF THE CHIEF OF STATE.

3. PRESS COMMENT AS CAN BE SEEN FROM THE ABOVE RESUME HAS BEEN ANYTHING BUT LAUDATORY ABOUT THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE REGIME. BUT THE CRITICISM CONTAINED NO SURPRISES, AND IS PRETTY MUCH A STRAIGHT-LINE CONTINUATION OF THE ATTITUDES OF ALL THE PRESS OVER THE LAST YEAR. TIEMPO'S STRICTURES, IT SHOULD BE NOTED, ARE THAT THE GOH IS NOT SUFFICIENTLY ACTIVIST. THE OTHER PAPERS REFLECT THE DISGRUNTLEMENT EITHER OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES, OR OF THE ANTI-LABOR ARAB BUSINESS SECTOR. THIS PARTICULAR ARAB GROUP IS ESPECIALLY HARSH, BUT IT DOES NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THE VIEWS OF THE ENTIRE PRIVATE SECTOR. THERE IS TO BE SURE WIDESPREAD CONCERN IN PRIVATE ENTERPRISE THAT THE GOH DOES NOT CONSULT IT SIFFICIENTLY, AND WE EXPECT THAT THIS WILL BE STRONGLY STATED IN MEMORANDUM WHICH COHEP (HONDURAN PRIVATE ENTERPRISE COUNCIL) IS PRESENTING TO GENERAL LOPEZ TODAY.

4. HOWEVER, IT SHOULD BE POINTED OUT THAT ALL THE CRITICISM STATED THAT THE TRADITIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES HAD BROUGHT THE SITUATION ON THEMSELVES BY THEIR INABILITY TO GOVERN. WHILE THE TONE OF PESSIMISM ABOUT THE REGIME IS VERY STRONG, THERE IS ALSO A PROPENSITY EXHIBITED BY THE PAPERS TO WAIT AND SEE WHAT THE GOVERNMENT DOES IN THE COMING YEAR BEFORE PASSING "FINAL JUDGMENT." LOPEZ' JANUARY 1 SPEECH WILL PROBABLY ALSO BE AN OCCASION FOR A LARGE VOLUME OF PRESS COMMENT.
SANCHEZ

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